

# The Fountain of Youth

BY EMERY POTTLE.

"Hain't you workin'?"

It was Mrs. Frizz who thus made gasping inquiry. She had climbed, with frightful exertion, four flights and on her Spanish way up the fifth had chanced to behold Mrs. Hendy through her open door.

"Come in!" called Mrs. Hendy, agreeably.

Mrs. Frizz staggered fleshily in and sank upon a chair with much the same impressive impact that a large, fat raindrop strikes the waiting pavement. Mrs. Hendy gazed at her with obvious compassion—so obvious, indeed, that Mrs. Frizz visibly fretted under it, being intensely sensitive to external impressions. The slight unbrag she took prompted her, once she had gained some control of her heaving bosom, to remark with ill-concealed gratification: "I s'pose you've lost your job to the Hair Store, then, if you ain't workin'?"

Mrs. Hendy regarded her with placid importance, undisturbed by the animus of her neighbor's attitude.

"Them stairs is awful on them that's took on flesh," she responded affably. "I tell Gus it must be just fierce for you goin' up an' down 's much 's you have to." She smiled with great cordiality at her visitor, who did not return this genial regard. Her reply was curt in the extreme.

"I can get around, I guess—an' I'm thinner 'n I was by a lot. Look at that!" She thrust her thumb into the recesses of her apparel and indicated thereby an infinitesimal slack of her "sistah." "An' it was that tight when I got it," she concluded triumphantly.

"Ain't that the limit—" commented Mrs. Hendy with appreciation. "You have fell off a loc!"

Somewhat mollified by this, and experiencing relief from the noisy palpitations of her heart, Mrs. Frizz returned to her earlier inquiry with a milder eye. "Why ain't you workin'?"

Has the Hair place busted?"

Mrs. Hendy preened herself in nonchalant pride. "My lands, no! I'm havin' my vacation."

"Your what?" breathed Mrs. Frizz asthmatically, fearful for the moment that her weight was beginning to affect her hearing.

"My vacation! Wouldn't it jar you?" and Mrs. Hendy giggled affectively.

"My heavens above, ain't you the stylish thing!" Mrs. Frizz was, for a brief instant, betrayed into admiration of her neighbor. She recovered herself immediately. "Them as has 'em," she went on, gloomily, "generally gits more than they bargain for. The man my Chris works for had one an' got bit by a snake—on the leg," she finished, circumstantially. "I hope yours want the same."

Mrs. Hendy refused to be depressed. "Murder!" she remarked pleasantly. "Wasn't that fierce! Old man Slawson to the saloon sees 'em, they say, but I never heard of 'em bitin'!"

Three days vacation do I have—yesterday, today an' tomorrow. Jimmie an' me's goin' up to the Zoo tomorrow. Yesterday I took in the Patrick O'Hara Outin' an' Amusement association's picnic up the sound. I tell you straight, Miss Frizz, I shan't never regret usin' that specific to bring my hair in. Seems 's if when my hair come in again everything come along with it."

"I s'ld think you was gittin' too old for such monkey business as them picnics," enviously broke in her fascinated friend. "You must be well toward fifty. An' them flimsy boats—when folks is gittin' on, what I say is, better stay on shore. You don't never hear of the

good pavements sinkin', an' blowin' out their insides, an' a-drownin' wimin an' children. Me own street is outin' enough fer me."

Mrs. Hendy prudently avoided discussion of the fragility of water in the and, indeed, passed over the aspersions on her age with less invidiousness than was her wont.

"I ain't so old as some I could name," she contented herself with, and betted complacently back in her chair. Evidently she was allowing herself the pleasing refreshment of agreeable recollection, for as her conversation lapsed a series of congratulatory smiles fled lightly across her not ill-made face.

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"My good land, what you gigglin' at there like one of the foolish-house folks?"

"Me age," Mrs. Hendy replied easily. "Tain't nothin' to laugh at."

Mrs. Frizz retorted severely.

"Them veils again," interpolated Mrs. Frizz, with a sick of endurance.

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"Ugh-huh," grunted Mrs. Frizz with appreciation.

"Too old—rats!" says Jimmie, just like that. I had to laugh. "Oh, go-wan," he says, 'git under the sink with the rest of the pigs!"

"Well, I kinda needed a change from the store—so I went. Last week there was a woman in to have her hair bronzed up a little an' I noticed her particular. She had on two veils—"

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was real polite an' got me some lemonade—which disagrees with me some-thing fierce—"A good thing, too," muttered Mrs. Frizz with a sinister air.

"How's that?" asked Mrs. Hendy. "Nothin'?" Well, the lady she makes me eat with them an' she tells her boy about me, an' my hair comin' in like it did, an' me havin' the elegant job—as I'd told her before. He kep' lookin' at me pretty close, an' begun to act real flirty—did you speak?"

"I must say he was a nice fellow," Mrs. Hendy proceeded unconsciously, again taking up the white celluloid comb and making a few delicate passes through her flowing hair.

"Well, Miss Frizz, you may well say I'm a guilty woman, an' I'm that ashamed. I didn't encourage 'im none, be it far from me! But when that band begun to play, an' they was dancin', I give you my word, I couldn't a-kep' my feet still—no, not if it was a steamboat to each of 'em. I don't s'pose we danced more'n eight times, an' then I begun to git kinda nervous thinkin' what me, a decent married woman, was doin'." An' then again, every few minutes, it come over me how the lady would be throwin' a fit if she knew! Well, I had to laugh. I got so giggly an' hysterical over it that the boy he thinks it's on account of me havin' the grand time, an' begins to git fresher'n paint."

"What do you wear them veils—" "Huh?" snorted Mrs. Frizz.

"—for?" he says, an' I says, 'To keep me peaches an' cream complexion from the freckles—just like that. I had to laugh. Ever since I fell down them steps out there—you'd a-died to see me—give me the rheumatism, an' dancin' so much I begun to feel it in my feet."

"I guess I'll set down and rest a while," I says to him. "You go an' git some other lady to spiel with you now." Mercy to goodness, Miss Frizz, 'f he didn't up an' say he didn't want no other lady but me, bolder'n brass, to you if any woman wouldn't be tickled some to be thought twenty years younger'n what she is—not but some tries hard enough to fool folks into believin' it."

Mrs. Frizz groaned dismally. "Of all the bold pieces—" she sighed under her breath. "Twenty—thirty!"

"Finally I sends him to git me a drink of water an' while he was gone I slipped away an' hid in the crowd. Well, when he come back he was just like a wild Indian runnin' round loose huntin' fer me. An' if you'll believe it he tracked me right down in no time. Thinks I, 'This is fierce!' An' then he pulls out my card—his name give it to him—an' begins to jabber. 'Sarah, Sarah, Sarah, till I could a-sunk right through that deck with shame—I could, indeed."

"Gimme that card," says I, off-hand. "I want to see 'f give you the right one." When I got it back I could a-cried with the relief. I fussed around with it—we was right by the rail—an' the first thing it dropped overboard—look by the wind." Mrs. Hendy winked her kindly eye at Mrs. Frizz, who looked somberly. "I says, 'To think it's the only one I got!' He was madder'n a push-cart man when he see it go. 'How I know where you live?' he says—just like that. 'I'll write to you.' I answers him, 'Write that which that was a date to go to hear the band play in the park next week. I says, 'Yes, Yon, but nothin' on earth wouldn't git me there!'"

Mrs. Hendy drew a long, virtuous breath.

"But the worst was when I wasn't lookin'—I might've be frank—an' an' he tried to hug me! 'I haf found lut on you,' he says, talkin' Swede. My kingdom come, I thought I'd die. If Gus'd a-seen me—" You take me to your ma, I hollered—just like them young ladies in the novels. An' just then along comes the old lady, herdin' children. I nearly up an' kissed her, so glad was I to see 'er. She sends away Yon—ain't that the jay name?—an' pretty soon she says to me, 'You're the girl I been lookin' fer fer Yon! I want you should marry 'im!'"

"Well, Miss Frizz, I can't begin to tell you all what that silly old lady says to me. I got so giggly, as I say, thinkin', 'My soul, if you only knew—an' me old enough to be his mother, almost—'"

"Huh," snickered her hearer.

"An' he was waitin' an' sentimental right along. I wanted to git up an' give a piercin' yell. 'Young an' pretty' was the words she used—my powers!"

"Second childhood," offered Mrs. Frizz stealthily.

Mrs. Hendy paused for breath and for another dash of tea in her cup.

"'Twas excitin'," she continued complacently. "Well, 'bout eight o'clock we gits back to New York—an' that's all."

Mrs. Frizz put her tea cup down on the table with a resolute bang. She rose massively and fixed a glittering eye on her hostess. "An' then," she demanded coldly, "I s'pose you told him how old you really was when these veils?"

Mrs. Hendy blushed sensitively. After a hesitation of some fateful moments she raised her eyes defensively. "No, I didn't."

Mrs. Frizz was speechless with indignation. She edged toward the door.

"No, I didn't, Miss Frizz," Mrs. Hendy proceeded firmly, "an' what's more, they ain't no woman on the face of this earth—I say it bold—that'd a-told, an' you know it!"

Mrs. Frizz refused to combat the statement. Instead she asked majestically: "An' wasn't they no more to it?"

Mrs. Hendy laughed outright. "He followed me for six blocks, comin' home, an' then I give 'im the slip an' run down a alley an' 'round the block again."

The outraged Mrs. Frizz raised a prophetic phand. "Sarah Hendy," she affirmed in Cassandra tones, "you mark my words, that there Swede'll find you some day an' then there'll be doin'!"

Mrs. Hendy capitulated weakly. "My stars above, wouldn't that bite you if he did? Gus'd kill 'im. Oh I'm the wicked woman, ain't I?"

"An' he was that cordially acquiesced Mrs. Frizz, 'an' the saints protect you." She waddled virtuously away. "I thank my Gawd," she called back, "that I ain't got no sinful vacations in my life! An' I must say, Sarah Hendy, I never heard a foolisher story in all my born days—them Oser men ought to git you."

Mrs. Hendy aroused herself almost immediately to a more cheerful view. She wiped away a stray tear or two, and removed the teapot from the stove.

"Pooh!" she called to the retreating back; "wimin is wimin—an' yo're one, too. I s'pose they ain't no danger of your ever bein' mistook fer twenty—but it was even so, 'fer next time I won't be wearin' the two veils—ain't it the limit!"

"He won't never find me, Yon won't," she considered, gazing earnestly into the tiny looking glass, "fer next time I won't be wearin' the two veils—ain't it the limit!"

(Copyright.)

# IRON BED SALE

WE have on our floor 180 different patterns of iron beds. Every color is shown here. This display includes two carloads of beds just received the past week. Every bed in the house is included in this sale. Big reductions on every bed.